4.11 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

The Visual Resources Section addresses the potential for the proposed Project to cause significant impacts on the visual resources in the project vicinity and its regional context.

4.11.1 Overview

The visual resources of an area comprise the features of its land forms, vegetation, water surfaces, and cultural modifications (physical changes caused by human activities) that give the landscape its visually aesthetic qualities. Landscape features, natural appearing or otherwise, form the overall impression of an area. This impression is referred to as "visual character or quality." Visual character is studied as a point of reference to assess whether a given project would appear compatible with the established features of the setting or would contrast noticeably and unfavorably with them. Existing land forms, water surfaces, vegetation, and cultural modifications are treated as an established part of the setting if they reflect how the landscape was formed, i.e., ecological processes versus human activities, how it functions, i.e., as part of an urban versus agricultural context, and how it is structured ("patterns" of development, such as irrigated croplands versus natural mosaic of grasslands and woodlands).

Visual resources have a social setting, which includes public values, goals, awareness, and concerns regarding visual quality. This social setting is addressed as "visual sensitivity," the relative degree of public interest in visual resources and concern over adverse changes in the quality of that resource (U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management [BLM] 1986; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service [U.S. Forest Service] 1977). As applied to visual impact analyses, sensitivity refers to public attitudes about specific views, or interrelated views, and is key in assessing how important a visual impact may be and whether or not it represents a significant impact.

Visual Sensitivity

The assessment of visual sensitivity establishes the most important viewing positions early in the analytical process. The other attribute, visual character, is assessed only in relation to the important, potentially affected views. Visual impacts subsequently are evaluated in the context of the character of these views.

To assess visual sensitivity, indicators of public concern have been identified for this Project and their sensitivity rated accordingly. The indicators are listed in Table 4.11-1 and reflect the concepts and methods of several Federal agencies, which treat sensitivity as a function of viewer activity, awareness, values, and goals (U.S. Forest Service 1977; U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service [SCS] 1978; BLM 1986; U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration [FHWA] 1980). Certain activities tend to heighten viewer awareness of scenic resources, while others tend to be distracting. People who are camping, picnicking, or driving for pleasure are more apt to notice the surrounding scenery than those commuting in heavy traffic or working at a construction site. Viewer awareness may also be heightened where areas are formally classified or otherwise designated as being of special interest, such as national historic monuments, national and state parks and forests, scenic routes and overlooks, visitor information centers, and wildlife refuges.

High visual sensitivity is assumed to exist where landscapes, particular views, or the visual characteristics of certain features are protected through policies, goals, objectives, and design controls in public planning documents. Visual significance is not always a function of aesthetic appeal. The public may confer visual significance on landscape components and areas that would otherwise appear unexceptional (FHWA 1980). For example, unexceptional landscapes along tertiary roads may be particularly important to local residents as undesignated open spaces (Kaplan 1979). Other areas may have regional or national cultural significance, but not be especially scenic. Nonetheless, their visual character may be considered important to their cultural value (FHWA 1980).

Three levels of visual sensitivity are defined below.

High Sensitivity. High sensitivity suggests that at least some part of the public is likely to react strongly to a threat to visual quality. Concern is expected to be great because the affected views are rare, unique, or in other ways are special to the region or locale. A highly concerned public is assumed to be more aware of any given level of adverse change and less tolerant than a public that has little concern. A small modification of the existing landscape may be visually distracting to a highly sensitive public and represent a substantial reduction in visual quality.

Moderate Sensitivity. Moderate sensitivity suggests that the public would probably voice some concern over substantial visual impacts. Often the affected views are secondary in importance or are similar to others commonly available to the public.

Table 4.11-1
Indicators of Visual Sensitivity

High Sensitivity
• Views of and from areas the aesthetic values of which are protected in laws, public regulations and policies, and public planning documents. • Views of and from designated areas of aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific interest, including national, state, county, and community parks, reserves, memorials, scenic roads, trails, interpretive sites of scientific value, scenic overlooks, recreation areas, and historic structures, sites, and districts. • Views of and from areas or sites of cultural/religious importance to Native Americans. • Views from national- or state-designated scenic highways or roads, or designated scenic highways or roads of regional importance. • Views from resort areas. • Views from urban residential subdivisions. • Views from segments of travel routes, such as roads, rail lines, pedestrian and equestrian trails, and bicycle paths near designated areas of aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific interest leading directly to them. Views seen while approaching an area of interest may be closely related to the appreciation of the aesthetic, cultural, scientific, or recreational significance of that destination.
Moderate Sensitivity
• Views from segments of travel routes near highly sensitive use areas of interest, serving as a secondary access route to those areas. • Views from rural residential areas and segments of roads near them which serve as their primary access route. • Views of and from undesignated but protected or popularly used or appreciated areas of aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific significance at the local, county, or state level. • Views from highways or roads locally designated as scenic routes and of importance only to the local population, or informally designated as such in literature, road maps, and road atlases. • Views from travel routes, such as roads, trails, bicycle paths, and equestrian trails leading directly to protected or popularly used undesignated areas important for their aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific interest. • Views of and from religious facilities and cemeteries.
Low Sensitivity
• Views from travel routes serving as secondary access to moderately sensitive areas. • Views from farmsteads, or groupings of fewer than four residences. • Views from industrial research/development, commercial, and agricultural use areas.

Noticeably adverse changes would probably be tolerated if the essential character of the views remains dominant.

Low Sensitivity. Low sensitivity is considered to prevail where the public is expected to have little or no concern about changes in the landscape. This may be because the affected views are not "public" (not accessible to the public) or because there are no indications that the affected views are valued by the public. For instance, little public concern for aesthetics is assumed to pertain to views from industrial, commercial, and purely agricultural areas. There are exceptions: some agricultural areas are prized for their open space value, and views of such are highly sensitive. Visual sensitivity is low for views from all sites, areas, travel routes, and sections of travel routes not identified as moderate or high in sensitivity.

Visual Character

The visual character of the affected landscape typically is described in terms of its land forms, vegetation, water features, and the "built" features of the environment. There are three objectives in assessing visual character. One is to identify the types of features considered to be inherent to the area. Such features are expressive of the prevailing land uses, for instance, in an urban or rural area; or they would express the ecological processes in a natural appearing landscape. The more defined the landscape is, e.g., totally natural appearing, purely residential, or consistently rural, the more opportunity there is for introduced features that are not part of the prevailing character to noticeably contrast with those defining the landscape.

The second objective in assessing visual character is to identify patterns or distribution of features that are characteristic of the affected setting. For instance, ecotones might define the distribution of vegetation in a natural setting. Architectural styles or density of housing might be defining attributes of a residential area.

The third objective is to describe the existing quality of the visual resources, which varies inversely with how noticeable incongruous features may be within public views. The current visual quality of the physical environment is described as its existing visual condition, which is defined in terms of four Visual Modification Classes (VMC), noted in Table 4.11-2, below.

Table 4.11-2
Visual Modification Class (VMC) Definitions

VMC	Definition
1	**Not noticeable** Changes in the landscape are within the field of view but generally would be overlooked by all but the most concerned and interested viewers; they generally would not be noticed unless pointed out (inconspicuous because of such factors as distance, screening, low contrast with context, or other features in view, including the adverse impacts of past activities).
2	**Noticeable, visually subordinate** Changes in the landscape would not be overlooked (noticeable to most without being pointed out); they may attract some attention but do not compete for it with other features in the field of view, including the adverse impacts of past activities. Such changes often are perceived as being in the background.
3	**Distracting, visually co-dominant** Changes in the landscape compete for attention with other features in view, including the adverse impacts of past activities (attention is drawn to the change about as frequently as to other features in the landscape).
4	**Visually dominant, demands attention** Changes in the landscape are the focus of attention and tend to become the subject of the view; such changes often cause a lasting impression on the affected landscape.

4.11.2 Environmental Setting

Visual Sensitivity

The Project is located within the Ellwood-Devereux Coast, an area widely recognized for its scenic beauty. The open space areas allow for expansive views of the ocean, bluffs, beaches, estuaries, and mountains. By the criteria in Table 4.11-1, views of the Project area are defined as highly sensitive. The EMT is within the Coastal Zone, where scenic resources are protected in laws, regulations, and policies, as noted below. Also, east of the EMT is the Coal Oil Point Reserve (COPR), an ecological reserve and scenic coastal area.

Landscape Character

The visual character of this portion of the Ellwood-Devereux Coast consists of a variety of natural features, including bluffs and beaches, estuaries and creeks, undeveloped parcels, and the Ocean Meadows Golf Course. Vegetative cover across the area varies from large groves of trees, shrub land, dune habitats, disturbed grasslands, to areas subject to human disturbance, such as recreational use. Overall, the character of the

area is that of undeveloped open areas, with undulating topography and interspersed groves of trees with few physical structures (University of California, Santa Barbara [UCSB] 2004a)

The onshore portion of the EMT is located on what is known as the South Parcel of UCSB's North Campus Area. This area is bounded by the Ocean Meadows Golf Course along the north, a eucalyptus windrow and open space on the west, the ocean to the south, and the COPR and Devereux Slough to the east. The parcel generally slopes up to the south, with undulating topography, in some locations due to erosion. Vegetation on the South Parcel includes disturbed grasslands, shrubs, and small trees (mostly in or along drainage courses), and areas that are devoid of vegetation, in part due to recreational use of the site. Adjacent sources of night lighting include the West Campus Family Student Housing at Storke Road and the existing residence located at the southern edge of the Ocean Meadows Golf Course (UCSB 2004a).

The COPR, located east of the EMT, is one of 34 reserves in the University of California Natural Reserve System and is used, in part, for educational and research purposes. Vegetative cover varies across this large site from wetland plant communities and disturbed grasslands to coastal sage scrub interspersed with non-native invasive plants. Pampas grass dominates a significant area of the back dunes, and some of the dunes have been stripped of vegetation due to recreational overuse. The south side of the mesa undergoes a transition from open prairie to scrub vegetation on the coastal bluffs and has a pastoral scenic quality. The area north of the mesa is generally more disturbed, with sparse grasslands and vast areas with no vegetative cover. The low-lying Devereux Slough is bounded on the northeast and southwest by upland areas, which create a dramatic backdrop to the wetland area (UCSB 2004a).

The area north of the EMT is heavily eroded due to past removal of topsoil to provide fill for the upper half of the historic Devereux Slough, to create the golf course, and to raise development to the north above tidal and flood water inundation. Drainage improvements include a series of berms and channels, and a partially effective sediment basin that directs storm water into the Devereux Slough. The area is popular with recreational users and contains willow woodland, coastal sage scrub, and disturbed non-native annual grasslands that are used by raptors for foraging, nesting, and roosting (Santa Barbara County and UCSB 2002).

The onshore portion of the EMT is partially screened by eucalyptus windrows to the north, east, and west, but it remains highly visible from the nearby beach and dunes and

from several other vantage points in the area (see Figures 4.11-1 and 4.11-2). Although somewhat screened by surrounding trees, the onshore EMT facilities are a prominent visual feature, with two 42-feet (ft) (12.8-meter [m]) high, 65,000-barrel (bbl) (10,334-m^3) white metal oil storage tanks, one 24-ft (7.3-m) high, 10,000-bbl (1,590-m^3) fire water-storage tank, an unused ballast water tank, security fencing, and electrical lines.

Exterior lighting is provided at the EMT to allow for nighttime operations and security. Lighting is provided by permanent fixtures between sunset and sunrise, and during times of reduced visibility. Light fixtures are located at the pump house, control room, on the road from the front gate to the control room, and between the two oil tanks on the berms. No extra lighting is used at the EMT during loading operations (Grieg 2005). Lighting at the EMT does not intrude on the nearest residential areas

Outside the fenced area is a single 12-inch-diameter (30-centimeter [cm]) crude oil loading line that extends southwesterly from the facility to the beach. This pipe is exposed in a shallow trench for much of this distance (Figure 4.11-3). The loading line reaches a beach valve location at the top of the dunes (see Figure 4.11-4); from that point the pipe is buried below the sand and extends underwater offshore to the barge mooring facility.

The offshore moorings and barge loading operations are visible from the beach and surrounding bluffs. The offshore mooring system of the EMT consists of six mooring (can) buoys located approximately 2,600 ft (792 m) from shore. Each mooring buoy is approximately 7 ft (2 m) outside diameter by 10 ft (3 m) long, and is painted white with a 4-inch (10-cm) blue stripe above the water line. Offshore, there are also a 30-inch-diameter (76-cm) sphere hose buoy and a spar pipeline marker, both painted white.

The barge Jovalan is 300 ft (91 m) long and 68 ft (21 m) wide, with a loaded draft of 18.5 ft (6 m). Figure 4.11-5 shows the moored barge Jovalan and tug boat. When moored, the barge Jovalan is a visually dominant feature in the coastal views from the beach and surrounding bluffs. Depending on weather conditions, offshore views of the barge Jovalan and tug frequently include views of Platform Holly, located approximately two miles (3 km) from shore.

All the vessels are equipped with running and deck lights. The barge Jovalan has three sets of floodlights that provide deck lighting and illuminate the water around the barge to a distance of approximately 200 ft (61 m). There are no lights that illuminate the water over the length of the pipeline. There are no lights on the mooring buoys (Grieg 2005).

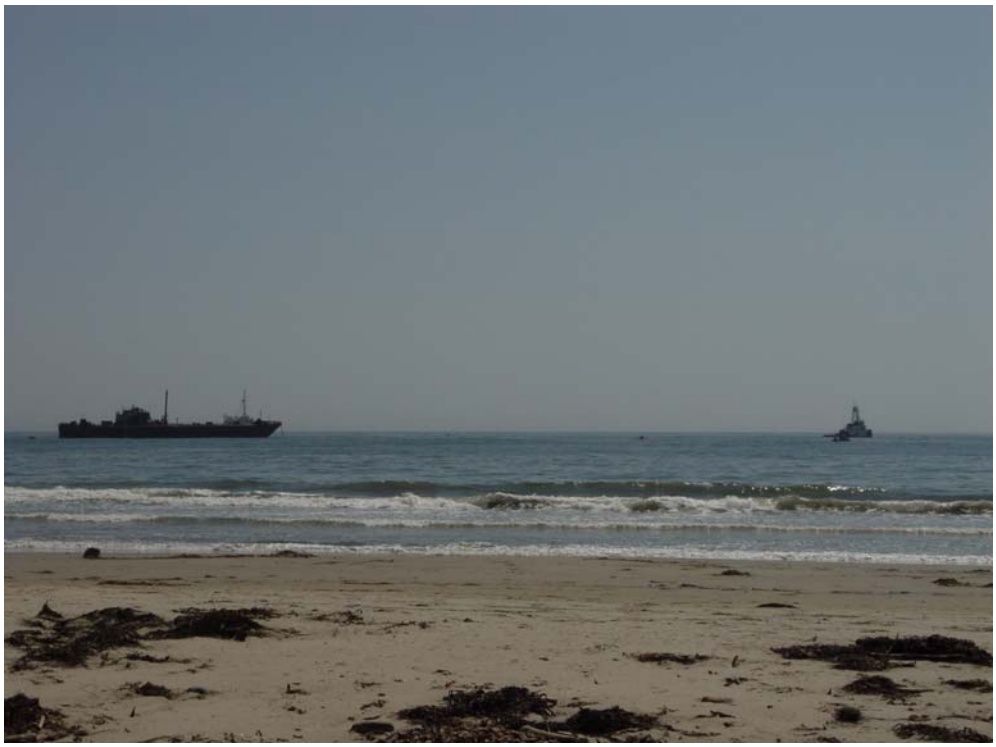
Figure 4.11-1
View of EMT Tanks from the Beach

Figure 4.11-2
View of EMT Tanks from Abandoned Road West of Site

Figure 4.11-3
View of the Loading Line from the Beach Bluff

Figure 4.11-4
View of the Loading Line Beach Valve from the Beach

Figure 4.11-5
View of the Barge Jovalan and Tug from the Beach



The barge Jovalan's lights are visible from the beach and bluffs, and are brighter than the visible lights on Platform Holly.

The EMT tanks were built in 1929 and have been a long-term feature of the landscape. When the EMT was constructed, the Ellwood-Devereux Coast contained numerous oil wells and attendant facilities, remnants of which are still visible. Over the past decades, the business of oil production and transportation has changed dramatically, such that the EMT is the last marine tanker facility in Santa Barbara County. The expectations of visitors to the Ellwood-Devereux Coast have also changed over the years. Visitors to the EMT vicinity now treasure the natural beauty of the area as a respite from the increasing urbanization of the Goleta Valley and Santa Barbara areas. Many visitors, especially those who may not realize the history of oil production in the area, may find the presence of the EMT incongruous.

Coastal Areas from the Los Angeles to San Francisco Bay Areas

This section briefly describes the visual environment along the Pacific outer coast for the evaluation of the risks associated with oil spills from the barge Jovalan as it transports oil to refineries in the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay areas. The outer

coast consists of a broad mix of land uses, including undeveloped open coastal areas, wetlands, unique shoreline and coastal resource areas as well as areas of concentrated development and urban uses that present a variety of visual features. Mountains and forests add a scenic backdrop. In addition, a large number of rivers and creeks cut the coastline, adding visual interest. The coastline area also contains numerous protected areas. Visual sensitivity of coastal views is considered high.

4.11.3 Regulatory Setting

Federal

The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as administered by the State of California, applies to this Project.

State

California Coastal Act § 30000 et seq.

Protection of scenic and visual qualities of coastal resources is an issue of high importance, and thus is addressed by several sections of the Coastal Act. Specifically, the Coastal Act is concerned with protecting the public viewshed, including views from public areas, such as highways, roads, beaches, coastal trails, and access ways, rather than views from private residences where no public views are available. Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states: "Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural landforms, to be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding area, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas."

Local

UCSB Long Range Development Program (LRDP) Amendment

The Coastal Act Element of the LRDP Amendment includes policies and standards to demonstrate consistency of the LRDP Amendment, and projects implemented under the LRDP, with the statutory requirements of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act (commencing with section 30200). The 2004 LRDP Amendment incorporates the relevant goals and policies of the Ellwood-Devereux Coast Open Space and Habitat Management Plan (UCSB 2004b).

4.11.4 Significance Criteria

Visual impacts are considered significant if one or a combination of the following apply:

- The Project is inconsistent with public policies, goals, plans, laws, regulations, or other directives concerning visual resources.
- Routine operations and maintenance visually contrast with or degrade the character of the viewshed.
- The Project results in a perceptible reduction of visual quality or character, lasting for more than one year, as seen from moderately to highly sensitive viewing positions.
- Night lighting would result in glare conditions affecting nearby residences.

Because of the time factor involved in oil dispersion, visual impacts from spills are considered to be significant (Class I, i.e., a significant impact that remains significant after mitigation) if first response efforts would not contain or clean up the spill, resulting in residual impacts that would be visible to the general public on shoreline or water areas.

4.11.5 Impact Analysis And Mitigation

The visual resources assessment focused on identifying potentially significant impacts, with the analysis directed toward public views in which the Project would be most visible. Critical views are partly defined as those that are moderately to highly sensitive. The public is considered to have a substantial concern over adverse changes in the quality of such views. Critical views also are defined as being those public views that would be most affected by the subject action, e.g., the greatest intensity of impact due to viewer proximity to the Project and project visibility, duration of the affected view, etc.

Critical views were identified as those from the beach and bluffs toward the onshore and offshore portions of the EMT (refer to Figures 4.11-1 to 4.11-5).

Impact VR-1: Visual Effects from the Increased Presence of the Barge Jovalan

The barge Jovalan currently makes approximately two trips to the EMT per month for loading. Under the proposed Project, the barge Jovalan could be present at

the EMT approximately seven times per month. The increased visual presence of the barge Jovalan would be considered a significant impact (Significant, Class I).

Impact Discussion

The proposed Project would continue ongoing operations at the EMT. The EMT was constructed in 1929 and the barge Jovalan has been transporting crude oil from the terminal since the 1980s. Both the EMT and the barge Jovalan have been part of the visual character of the project area for many years. While operation of the EMT would seem inconsistent with public policies, goals, plans, laws, regulations or other directives concerning visual resources, it operates as a legal, non-conforming use (see Section 4.7, Land Use, Planning, and Recreation).

Implementation of the proposed Project would not cause a noticeable visible change in the onshore operations of the EMT. No new facilities or modifications to facilities are proposed. Night lighting does not affect neighboring land uses and would not change.

Implementation of the lease renewal would allow Venoco to continue barging crude oil from the EMT up to the permitted limits. Over time, this could mean that the number of trips that the barge Jovalan makes to the EMT could increase from approximately two per month to a little more than seven per month (no more than 88 times per year). The barge is currently visible from the beach and bluffs approximately every 15 days. Under the proposed Project, the barge would be visible approximately every four days.

While the EMT operates as a legal, non-conforming use, it is not located in an industrial port area frequented by barges and tankers. The barge Jovalan moored 2,600 ft (792 m) offshore is a visually dominant industrial feature in an area prized for its aesthetic and recreational value. The existing barge operations in the scenic, heavily visited Ellwood-Devereux Coast area would be considered a significant visual impact. Under the proposed Project, the more than three-fold increase in the presence of the barge in a highly sensitive coastal viewshed would exacerbate the existing significant impact and is considered a significant impact (Class I).

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce the level of this impact.

Residual Impacts

No effective mitigation measure was identified. The impact would remain significant (Class I).

Impact VR-2: Visual Effects from Accidental Oil Spills at or Near the EMT

Potentially long term visual impacts of an oil spill, depending on the level of physical impact and cleanup effectiveness (Significant, Class I).

Impact Discussion

This analysis considers the occurrence of accidental spills that could occur at or near the EMT. In general, the potential impacts resulting from such an occurrence would tend to degrade the visual quality of the water and shoreline. The degree of impact is influenced by factors including, but not limited to, location, spill size, type of material spilled, prevailing wind and current conditions, the vulnerability and sensitivity of the shoreline, and effectiveness of early containment and cleanup efforts.

Spill risk and response capability are addressed in Section 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The greatest risk of spills occurs at the EMT, where small spills could occur during normal operations, as well as from leaks at pipe fittings and valves. Generally, small leaks and spills (up to 10 bbls [1.6 m^3]) could be contained with contingency measures employed at the EMT. Visually, oiling conditions could range from light oiling, which appears as a surface sheen, to heavy oiling, including floating lumps of tar. Heavy crude oil may disappear over a period of several days, with remaining heavy fractions floating at or near the surface in the form of mousse, tarballs, or mats, and lasting from several weeks to several months. Therefore, the presence of oil on the water would change the color and, in heavier oiling, textural appearance of the water surface. Oil on shoreline surfaces or nearshore marsh areas would cover these surfaces with a brownish-blackish, gooey substance.

Such oiling would result in a negative impression of the highly sensitive viewshed. The public would react negatively to its visual effects. Without rapid containment by immediate booming and cleanup, the visual effects of even a small spill of up to 10 bbls (1.6 m^3) can leave residual impacts, and they can be significant (Class I).

In the immediate area of the EMT are a number of highly sensitive habitats, including the Devereux and Goleta Sloughs. According to the South Ellwood Field Emergency Action Plan and Oils Spill Contingency Plan (OSCP), protection of these areas is a high priority. The Plans describe a protection strategy that includes booming. This is discussed in more detail in Sections 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, 4.4, Hydrology, Water Resources, and Water Quality and 4.5, Biological Resources.

The impact of a spill could last for a long period of time, depending on the level of physical impact and cleanup effectiveness. Even in events where light oiling would disperse rapidly, significant impacts are expected. In events where medium to heavy oiling occurs over a widespread area, and where first response cleanup efforts are not effective, leaving residual effects of oiling, significant impacts (Class I) would be expected. The physical effort involved in cleanup itself, including the equipment used, would contribute to a negative impression of the environment and the visual impact. It is impossible to predict with any certainty the potential consequences of spills; therefore, visual impacts can be considered to be significant (Class I).

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of those measures identified in Sections 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; 4.4, Hydrology, Water Resources, and Water Quality; and 4.5, Biological Resources, for contingency planning and spill response would be required.

Rationale for Mitigation

The measures presented in the above-mentioned sections provide improved oil spill capabilities, oil spill containment measures, and protection of resources. Even with implementation of those measures, the risk to the visual environment may be significant for small spills.

Residual Impacts

Even with successful implementation of mitigation measures for oil spill impacts, visual resources may be affected by spills, and impacts would remain significant (Class I).

Impact VR-3: Visual Effects from Accidental Oil Spills from the Barge Jovalan in Transit

Spills would change the color and texture of water and shoreline conditions. The level of public sensitivity and expectations of viewers would result in a negative impression of the viewshed and result in significant impacts (Potentially Significant, Class I), depending on the various characteristics of a spill and its residual effects.

Impact Discussion

A moderate to large spill from the barge Jovalan as it transits offshore has the potential to spread over a large area, with floating oil and oil contacting sensitive shoreline

resources, given the right wind and current conditions and depending upon the size and origin of the spill. Section 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, presents the results of oil spill modeling analysis. Response capability is also analyzed in Section 4.2.

Spills along the outer coast could result in significant impacts (Class I), where spills would be visible in the nearshore zone or at the shoreline. Spills would change the color and texture of water and shoreline conditions. The level of public sensitivity and expectations of views along the outer coast are more varied than those from the Ellwood-Devereux Coast area. Along some portions of the outer coast, public usage is low. In such areas, the public perception and expectations of viewers would not change as much as in those areas the public frequents. In high-use areas, such as coastal park and beach areas, ecological preserve areas, communities and harbors, and other areas where a higher number of viewers would be present, visual sensitivity would be high where cleanup efforts and residual effects were occurring.

It is impossible to predict with any certainty the potential consequences of spills; therefore, visual impacts are considered significant (Class I), depending on the location of the spill and its visibility to the public, either offshore or within the coastal environment.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of those measures identified in Sections 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; 4.4, Hydrology, Water Resources, and Water Quality; and 4.5, Biological Resources, for contingency planning and spill response would be required.

Rationale for Mitigation

The measures presented in the above-mentioned sections provide improved oil spill capabilities, oil spill containment measures, and protection of resources.

Residual Impacts

Even with successful implementation of mitigation measure for oil spill impacts, visual resources may be affected by large spills, and impacts would remain significant (Class I).

Table 4.11-3
Summary of Visual Resources Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact (Impact Class)	Mitigation Measures
VR-1: Visual Effects from the Increased Presence of the Barge Jovalan (Class I).	No mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce the level of this impact.
VR-2: Visual Effects from Accidental Oil Spills At or Near the EMT (Class I).	Implementation of those measures identified in Sections 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; 4.4, Hydrology, Water Resources, and Water Quality; and 4.5, Biological Resources, for contingency planning and spill response.
VR-3: Visual Effects from Accidental Oil Spills from the Barge Jovalan in Transit (Class I).	Implementation of those measures identified in Sections 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; 4.4, Hydrology, Water Resources, and Water Quality; and 4.5, Biological Resources, for contingency planning and spill response.

4.11.6 Impacts Of Alternatives

No Project Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative, Venoco's lease would not be renewed and the existing marine terminal would be subsequently decommissioned with its components abandoned in place, removed, or a combination thereof. The decommissioning of the marine terminal would be governed by an Abandonment and Restoration Plan, a copy of which has been submitted to the CSLC, Santa Barbara County, and the city of Goleta as a component of Venoco's "Development Plan Application for Ellwood Oil Pipeline Installation and Field Improvements" (Venoco 2005). Under the No Project Alternative, an alternative means of crude oil transportation would either need to be in place prior to decommissioning of the EMT or production at Platform Holly would cease. A consequence of the absence of the EMT and alternative crude oil transportation methods would be that the petroleum resources associated with the South Ellwood Field would be stranded, at least temporarily. It is more likely, however, that under the No Project Alternative, Venoco would pursue alternative means of traditional crude oil transportation such as truck transportation or a pipeline. For purposes of this EIR, it has been assumed that the No Project Alternative would result in a decommissioning schedule that would consider implementation of one of the described transportation options. Any future crude oil transportation option would be the subject of a subsequent application to the CSLC, city of Goleta, or Santa Barbara County, depending on the proposed option. As a result, visual impacts would occur under this Alternative until operations at the EMT case.

Visual impacts, both positive and negative, could result from subsequent abandonment or removal of the EMT and the proposed new method of oil transportation; however, the significance of these potential impacts would not be known until the applications are submitted and the appropriate environmental reviews are conducted.

Truck Transportation

If this alternative method of crude oil transportation is selected, the produced oil would be shipped from the EOF via trucks to the Carpinteria Oil and Gas Processing Facility instead of being shipped by barge through the EMT.

Under this Alternative, a truck loading rack would be constructed at the EOF to accommodate the necessary truck loading requirements. A truck unloading rack would be required at the Carpinteria facility to transfer crude oil from the truck to an existing storage tank at the facility. The crude oil would be co-mingled with production from Venoco's Carpinteria facility and transported via pipeline to Los Angeles area refineries.

Construction of the loading and unloading racks would occur in each facility's fenced area; no additional land would be required. The presence of the loading and unloading racks would be compatible with the existing industrial nature of the facilities and would not result in a change in the visual character of the facilities.

Impact VR-4: Visual Effects from the Increase in the Presence of Trucks

Increased presence of heavy trucks would create negative visual impacts (Less Than Significant, Class III).

Impact Discussion

Under this Alternative there would be a potential maximum of 82 truck trips per day (164 one-way trips) from the EOF to the Carpinteria facility. The increased presence of trucks on existing roads would be expected to result in adverse but less than significant visual impacts (Class III).

Pipeline Transportation

This alternative method of crude oil transportation would involve the construction of an onshore 10-inch-diameter (25.4-centimeter [cm]) crude oil pipeline from the EOF to the Plains All American Pipeline (AAPL) at Las Flores Canyon. The proposed 10-inch-

diameter (25.4 cm) pipeline would cross under Highway 101 near the EOF and run parallel to the north side of the highway for approximately 10 miles (16 kilometers [km]) to Las Flores Canyon. At Las Flores Canyon, the pipeline would run a short distance up the canyon to the AAPL pipeline pump station that is located at the ExxonMobil Santa Ynez Unit (SYU) oil and gas processing facility. The Venoco Pipeline would tie in directly to the AAPL and would not utilize any of the ExxonMobil SYU storage tanks. The pipeline would be installed along Calle Real, which runs parallel to Highway 101 north of the highway. Since Calle Real does not run the entire length of the proposed pipeline route, the pipeline would also cross a few stretches of private ranch/agricultural roads that parallel Highway 101.

Impact VR-5: Visual Effects from Pipeline Construction Activities

Construction activities would create negative visual impacts (Less Than Significant, Class III).

Impact Discussion

During construction of the pipeline, heavy machinery and materials would be present and visible from public roads and public use areas, such as Sandpiper Golf Course and El Capitan State Beach. Construction of the pipeline would be expected to take approximately four to six months. The short-term visual impact of construction would be adverse but not significant (Class III).

Impact VR-6: Visual Effects from Pipeline Installation

Installation of the pipeline would result in the removal of existing vegetation along the pipeline right-of-way, altering the visual character of the area (Potentially Significant, Class II).

Impact Discussion

Clearing and excavation to install the pipeline would occur along Calle Real and private roads. After completion of the pipeline installation, the trench would be filled and the ground graded to pre-construction conditions. However, the strip along the pipeline route where vegetation was removed would remain visible from public roads, such as Highway 101. The removal of natural vegetation would alter the visual character of the landscape visible from public areas. This visual impact would be considered significant (Class II).

Mitigation Measure

VR-6a. Revegetation of Pipeline Right of Way. The Applicant shall revegetate the cleared portion of the pipeline right-of-way with species that are biologically and visually compatible with the surroundings and continue with the appropriate watering schedule, if necessary, for establishing the permanent vegetative cover.

Rationale for Mitigation

Revegetating the cleared pipeline right-of-way would ensure that the visual impact is reduced in the shortest possible time. Waiting for natural revegetation to occur would prolong the visual impact, possibly for years, given the slow growth of the native vegetation of the area. In addition, non-native invasive species would most likely invade the cleared area first, further reducing the successful re-colonization of the right-of-way strip by native species.

4.11.7 Cumulative Projects Impact Analysis

Impact VR-7: Visual Effects from Cumulative Barge Activities

Outer coast, San Francisco Bay, and Los Angeles port views currently include large numbers of tankers, ships, barges, sport and fishing vessels, and other vessels that are considered part of the visual environment. The cumulative impact of the increased barge trips to the EMT is considered to be adverse but less than significant (Less Than Significant, Class III).

Impact Discussion

Ship movements along the outer coast and in the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay areas are part of an established pattern of activity that has occurred for many years and will continue to occur over the period of the proposed Project. The barge Jovalan contributes to that activity. These vessel movements are an acceptable visual action. The effect of the barge Jovalan's presence on the cumulative visual environment would result in adverse changes, but less than significant impacts (Class III).

Impact VR-8: Visual Effects from Accidental Oil Spills

Visual impacts from oil spills from multiple sources that would overlap in time (either the spill occurrence or cleanup operation) are unlikely; however, such

incidents would result in significant adverse visual impacts (Potentially Significant, Class I).

Impact Discussion

A spill can begin as a localized incident but has the potential to spread over a very large area. While multiple spills are unlikely, if more than one spill were to occur within a very short timeframe in the project area, Los Angeles or San Francisco Bay areas, or along the outer coast, significant adverse visual impacts (Class I) could result.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of those measures identified in Sections 4.2, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; 4.4, Hydrology, Water Resources, and Water Quality; and 4.5, Biological Resources, for contingency planning and spill response would be required.

Rationale for Mitigation

The above-mentioned measures provide improved oil spill capabilities, oil spill containment measures, and protection of resources.

Residual Impacts

Impacts to the cumulative visual environment could remain significant (Class I) for large spills.

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